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DEPT FOR NEA/ARP AMACDONALD AND DS/ATA JNASON
NSC FOR DPNSA JOHN BRENNAN AND AJOST
DHS FOR CBP/OIOC EWALKER AND CPB/PLT GDEWEY

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [EAIR](#) [YM](#)
SUBJECT: ROYG CAUTIOUSLY RECEPTIVE TO ENHANCED COOPERATION
ON MONITORING OF INTERNATIONAL TRAVELERS

Classified By: Ambassador Stephen Seche for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (S) SUMMARY. In a January 18 meeting with Deputy Prime Minister for Defense and Security Rashad al-Alimi, the Ambassador conveyed strong USG interest in enhanced cooperation on airport security, sharing of passenger manifests for international flights to Yemen, and access to information on foreigners pursuing language and religious studies in Yemen. Alimi was cautiously receptive to this enhanced cooperation and said that the ROYG had already taken steps to improve monitoring of international travelers to Yemen, including a stop to visa issuance at Sana'a International Airport. The USG should act quickly to capitalize on the ROYG's current receptivity to our support, especially with regard to improved passenger screening at Sana'a International Airport, by expediting the arrival of an ATA assessment team. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (S) On January 18, the Ambassador conveyed to Deputy Prime Minister for Defense and Security Rashad al-Alimi the substance of a recent conversation with DPNSA John Brennan regarding enhanced U.S.-Yemeni CT cooperation. The conversation focused on three areas: airport security, sharing of passenger manifests for international flights into Yemen, and access to information on foreigners pursuing language and religious studies in Yemen.

¶3. (S) In the area of airport security, the Ambassador explained plans for an assessment team to visit Sana'a International Airport to identify ways to enhance the airport's security measures. He emphasized that the U.S. would like the ROYG to begin secondary screening for every passenger at the airport, and was prepared to provide assistance to help the airport institute these measures. Alimi welcomed the assessment team, adding that Sana'a International Airport receives periodic inspections from the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and, according to the Ministry of Transportation, is in compliance with ICAO standards. (Note: Post is attempting to locate the last ICAO report on Sana'a International Airport. End Note.)

¶4. (S) The Ambassador also requested that the ROYG share passenger manifests for all international flights to Yemen so that the information could be passed through USG databases to identify known extremists entering the country. He noted a desire to have Yemen's Embassy in Washington share names of Americans applying for visas and requested that the ROYG cease issuing visas at Sana'a International Airport. Alimi said the ROYG had already decided to stop issuing visas at the airport for a period of at least six months. (Note: MFA

has not yet notified the Embassy of any change in visa issuance at the airport and a passport official at the airport denied that there was any change. End Note.) Alimi stated that Yemeni authorities receive the passenger manifests for international flights "only hours" before the flights arrive, but added he was receptive to studying the best mechanism through which to share this information.

15. (S) The Ambassador noted that the USG would like access to the names of foreigners pursuing language or religious studies in Yemen, to check the names against USG databases and identify known or potential extremists. Alimi stated that the ROYG would work to identify the best mechanism for sharing this information and said, "It is very important for us to know if there is an extremist living in our country" under the pretext of studying. (Note: Sabri Saleem, the president of a language and regional studies institute in Sana'a, told PolOff on January 17 that Ministry of Interior officers had already visited his institute to collect information on foreigners studying there. End Note.)

COMMENT

16. (S) With the ROYG intensifying its CT operations and seeking to highlight its resolve to deny safe haven to terrorists, the time is opportune to press for expanded cooperation in areas, such as sharing passenger manifests, where the ROYG in the past has declined to accede to our requests. On the specific issue of the ATA airport-security assessment team, we urge that a date for the visit be fixed as soon as possible to take full advantage of the ROYG's

expressed interest to improve its passenger-screening techniques. END COMMENT.
SECHE